

Youth's Department.

ANSWERS TO
SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.
For eight weeks in advance.

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| 204. 2 Samuel xix. 34—37. | 231. 1 Kings xx. 29—34. |
| 205. Nehemiah vii. 63, 64. | 232. 1 Kings xx. 35—43. |
| 206. Mark x. 46—52. | 233. 2 Kings vi. 11, 12. |
| 207. Matthew xvi. 17, compared with Mark x. 46. | 234. 2 Kings vi. 13—23. |
| 208. Mark x. 53. | 235. 2 Kings vi. 24—29. |
| 209. Mark x. 52. | 236. 2 Kings vii. 3—7. |
| 210. Matt. viii. 13.—ix. 2, 23.—xv. 23. | 237. 2 Kings viii. 7, 8. |
| 211. Isaiah ii. 13. | 238. 2 Kings viii. 14, 15. |
| 212. Ezekiel xxvii. 5, 6. | 239. 2 Kings xiii. 3, 24, 25. |
| 213. Deut. xxxii. 14.—Psalm xxii. 12. | 240. Jeremiah xlix. 27. |
| 214. Psalm lxxviii. 15. | 241. Amos i. 4. |
| 215. Isaiah xxxiii. 9. | 242. Genesis xxxv. 22, 24. |
| 216. Numbers xxi. 33—35. | 243. Genesis xxxv. 18. |
| 217. 2 Kings i. 2. | 244. Genesis xlv. 20, 29—31. |
| 218. 2 Kings i. 16. | 245. Genesis xli. 46.—27 years old. |
| 219. Matthew xii. 21. | 246. Genesis xlv. 2, 12. |
| 220. Matthew x. 25. | 247. Genesis xliii. 31.—xlv. 14. |
| 221. 2 Sam. iii. 10.—xvii. 11. xxiv. 2, 15. | 248. Daniel v. 1—4, and 22—24. |
| 222. Genesis xxii. 19. | 249. Daniel v. 25—23. |
| 223. Genesis xxvii. 32, 33. | 250. Daniel v. 30, 31. |
| 224. Genesis xxi. 14—19. | 251. Daniel i. 7, or v. 12. |
| 225. 1 Kings xix. 3, 4. | 252. Daniel v. 18, 22. |
| 226. 1 Kings xix. 4—8. | 253. John xi. 1, 5. |
| 227. 1 Kings xv. 18. | 254. Matthew xxi. 17—22. |
| 228. 1 Kings xx. 12, 16. | 255. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. |
| 229. 1 Kings xv. 18—20. | 256. Genesis xxviii. 19. |
| 230. 1 Kings xx. 20. | 257. Judges iv. 5. |
| | 258. 1 Samuel vii. 15, 16. |
| | 259. 1 Kings xii. 29—33. |

CHURCH CALENDAR.

March 25.—Fourth Sunday in Lent.
—Annunciation of Virgin Mary.
April 1.—Fifth Sunday in Lent.

THE YOUNG CHURCHMAN ARMED.
CHAP. IV.

ON KINGS AND RULERS BEING THE GUARDIANS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE CHURCH.

1. What have Kings and Rulers to do with religion?
Much; for they have to save their own souls, and to promote to the utmost of their power the salvation of those over whom they are set.
2. Was this duty recognized by the Jewish princes under the Old Testament dispensation?
By all who were pious and right-minded; and a marked blessing rested on those who conscientiously endeavoured to practice it. (1)
3. Is there any reason to suppose, that this duty is not as much incumbent on Christian princes, as it was upon Jewish ones?
No; their influence and authority and power are talents entrusted to their care, for the use or neglect of which they have to render an account. (2)
4. How can they best perform this their duty in their public capacity?
By discountenancing and punishing all open vice and immorality, and by providing suitable means for the instruction of the people in divine things.
5. What caution ought they to observe in doing this?
That the religion they promote and establish be the true religion of Christ, and that the means used for its promulgation be in accordance with the practice of the apostles, and best calculated to ensure success.
6. Are then the King and the government of England right in upholding the church, as it is at present established in the land by law?
Certainly; until it can be proved that its doctrines and discipline are at variance with the gospel, or that it is not suited to perform the work which it undertakes. (3)
7. But is the church right in accepting the aid and the patronage of earthly princes?
Surely; it is bound, while it trusts entirely on the divine blessing, to accept every aid and to adopt every means which are lawful to forward its object. (4)
8. Still, might not religion be safely left to the people themselves, and would they not voluntarily provide themselves with the means of grace, without any interference of their rulers?
Experience has proved that they would not; for those who are unconcerned about their souls, as multitudes are, would very contentedly go without the Bread of Life altogether, if it were not provided for them. (5)
9. Are all persons agreed in holding these sentiments?
No; many think that kings and governors have no right to interfere in matters of religion, but as private persons, and that it would thrive better without their aid.
10. From what do they argue that kings and governors have no right to interfere in matters of religion?
From the absence of all mention in the New Testament of the duty of magistrates and rulers in this respect.
11. Would it not have been very extraordinary for the apostles Paul or Peter to have written rules to the princes and governments of those times concerning the church, when these were all heathens and open persecutors of it?
Certainly it would; and had we found any such directions in their writings, we should justly have suspected that they were the additions of some other persons, and were not originally there. (6)
12. What other argument do such persons use?
They bring forward our Lord's answer to Pilate's question, John xviii. 36, "My kingdom is not of this world;" which has nothing whatever to do with the subject.
13. What is the true sense of these words?

They contain merely an assurance that it was not Christ's intention to set up a temporal kingdom on earth, nor to interfere in any way with the authority of the Romans, as Pilate was led by the Jews to imagine—Luke xxiii. 2, and John xix. 12. (7)

14. From what do people draw the conclusion, that religion would thrive better without the interference of those in power and authority?

From the fact that no prince nor government patronised Christianity in its early days, and that it nevertheless flourished and increased more than it has ever done since.

15. Is this a fair conclusion?

No; for at the first commencement of the Christian dispensation, a very especial blessing rested upon the church; and great and rapid as was its increase without the assistance of earthly princes, it might have been greater and more rapid, had it pleased God that it should enjoy such an additional advantage.

16. Are there not many passages in Scripture which seem to predict a time when the church of Christ should be especially befriended and protected by earthly princes?

Yes: among which is Isaiah xlix. 23; "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers."

17. If, then, a time is predicted when kings and queens are to be nursing fathers and mothers to the church, what reason can be assigned why they should not be such now?

None whatever.

18. Are the objections, then, so frequently made in the present day against the patronage of the church by the state and its rulers, of any real weight?

No; and they are, moreover, of very recent invention, having never been maintained in any former age.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

(1) As in the case of Asa, whose zeal for the moral reformation of his people and the promotion of the true religion among them, was specially rewarded, 2 Chron. xv. 15. So also in the case of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii. 1—13.

(2) The argument, that a king is bound as a king to provide for the spiritual wants of his subjects, in the same way that a father is bound as a father to provide for those of his children and family, has never been shaken and never can be. See Gen. xviii. 19.

(3) In upholding the church, the government of the land infringes not upon the liberty of conscience. It freely allows every man to worship God according to his own mind: and compels no one to come in, by the infliction of pains and penalties on those that stay out.

(4) St. Paul did not hesitate to plead his privileges as a Roman citizen, (Acts xxii. 25,) nor to put himself under the protection of Cæsar (Acts xxv. 11,) when he thought that such a procedure would conduce to the interests of the gospel. Why may not a Christian church as well as a Christian individual, put itself under the protection of an earthly prince, especially when that prince is a Christian, and not, as Nero, a heathen?

(5) Every overgrown parish in the land, of which there are such numbers, where the accommodation in the existing places of worship is inadequate to the wants of the population, is an undeniable evidence that the great mass of the people will not voluntarily provide themselves with the means of grace.

(6) If they had written any such instructions, it must have been by anticipation and in the spirit of prophecy. For it was not till the reign of Constantine, A. D. 325, that any use could have been made of them.

(7) This notion, that rulers have nothing to do with the religion of the people, is a new light which has dawned on the minds of dissenters of the present generation. Non-conformists of former days, who assuredly were in no wise inferior to those of the present day in scriptural knowledge, piety, and talents, utterly repudiated the idea.

RESIGNATION.

A mother was kneeling in the deep hush of evening at the couch of two infants, whose rosy arms were twined in a mutual embrace. A slumber, soft as the moonlight that fell through the lattice over them, like a silver veil lay on their delicate lips; the soft bright curls that clustered on their pillow were slightly stirred by their gentle and healthy breathing, and that smile which beams from the pure depths of the fresh glad spirit, yet rested on their red lips. The mother looked upon their exceeding beauty with a momentary pride; and then, as she continued to gaze on the lovely slumberers, her dark eye deepened with intense and unutterable fondness, and a cold shuddering fear came over her, lest those buds of life, so fair, so glowing, might be touched with sudden decay, and gathered back in their brightness to the dust. And she lifted her voice in prayer solemnly, passionately, earnestly, that the Giver of life would spare to her those blossoms of love, over whom her soul thus yearned. And as the low-breathed accents fell on the still air, deepening thought came over her, and her spirit went out with her loved ones into the strange wild path of life, and a stronger horror chilled her frame as she beheld mildew and blight settling on the fair and lovely of earth, and high and rich hearts scorched with desolating and guilty passions. And the prayer she was breathing grew yet more fervent, even to agony, that He who is the foundation of all purity would preserve those whom he had given, permitting neither crime nor folly to ensnare them. As the prayer died away in the weakness of the spent spirit, a pale shadowy form stood beside the sleepers. "I am death," said the spectre, "and I come for thy babes—I am commissioned to bear them where the perils you deprecate are unknown, where neither stain, nor dust, nor shadow, can reach the rejoicing spirit. It is only by yielding them to me that you can preserve them for ever from contamination and decay." A wild conflict—a struggle, as of the soul starting in strong agony, shook the mother's frame, but faith, and the love which hath a purer fount than of earthward passions, triumphed, and she yielded up her babes to the spectre. "Behold," said Death, as he touched the fair forms, and the beauty of life gave place to a holier and yet deeper loveliness, "behold, the smile of innocence is now for ever sealed. They will waken where there is neither blight nor tempest." And the benign power, whom we call the spoiler, bore away the now

perfect blossoms of immortality to the far off sky; while the fond mother, in the spirit of Christian submission, exclaimed, "Father, thy will be done."—(Christian Journal.)

THE NUMBER 'SEVEN.'

It should seem that in the earliest ages it was a characteristic rite of the pure patriarchal worship to sacrifice on occasions of great solemnity by sevens. The key to this rite is the institution of the Sabbath. The observance of the seventh day was the sacrament of the ancient church; of that church which was more ancient than the Jewish; of that priesthood, which was more dignified than Aaron's; of the church of Adam before the flood; of the church of Noah after it. For the same reason that the seventh day was sanctified, the victims bled by sevens; and to sacrifice seven rams or seven bullocks at a time, was to declare that the offering was made to that God who created the world in six days, and to whose service the seventh day was therefore consecrated. Upon the same principle it was that much of the Jewish ritual was governed by the number seven. The golden candlestick had seven branches supporting seven burning lamps. When atonement was to be made for the sin of a priest or of the congregation, the veil was to be sprinkled seven times with the blood of the offering, and the mercy seat was to be sprinkled seven times on the great day of annual expiation. The festivals of the Jews were celebrated each for seven days successively, and among the extraordinary sacrifices of each day were seven or twice seven lambs. When the ark of the covenant was brought from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem, the sacrifice on that great occasion was seven bullocks and seven rams.—Bp. Horsley.

PSALM LXXXIII. 5.

"They have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee."

When Christ was about to be crucified, it is observed by St. Luke that "the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves." And however the enemies of the Church may quarrel with one another, when they have nothing else to do, yet if a favourable opportunity offer itself for making an attack upon her, they lay aside their difference, and unite as one man; by no means refusing the friendly aid even of infidels and atheists, who are always ready to join in carrying on the war against the common adversary.—(Horne's Commentary)

Legal preaching is to tell men to obey the law by their own exertions. Evangelical preaching proclaims the same law, but instead of directing men to keep its commands by the depraved, ruined, and deceitful operations of their own hearts, it directs them to do it by the power of God.

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